

HISTORY OF THE  
37TH AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON  
1 OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 1971

Prepared by

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Commander

PACIFIC AIR FORCES, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

VHPA217

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LT COL WILLIAM M. HARRIS IV

Born 16 April 1925 in old Georgetown in Washington, D.C., Lt Col Harris entered Aviation Cadet Training directly from High School in June 1943. He graduated from Twin Engine Pilot Training Class 44-H, 9 September 1944. For the next 15 months, Lt Col Harris flew the B-24 Liberator until his separation from service in December 1945.

Lt Col Harris worked for his father for two years and then entered the University of Maryland for the spring semester of 1948. He graduated in 1952 with a degree in Biology.

On 6 June 1952, Lt Col Harris was recalled to active duty and sent to the Chemical Corps Biological and Chemical Warfare Research Center at Ft Detrick, Maryland. During this tour of duty the Col was directly involved with research and testing on a prototype Ranch Hand Aerial Spray System which was successfully deployed in SEA ten or more years later.

From Ft Detrick Lt Col Harris was station for three years at the Air Force Armament Test Laboratory, Eglin AFB, Florida where he was involved as a test pilot in the weapons certification mission.

Following this, Lt Col Harris moved on to a tour at Headquarters Air Force Systems Command. While there, Lt Col Harris managed applied research projects in the bioastronautic field of study concerning the "man in space" program. During this period, he maintained his flying proficiency in T-33 aircraft.

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June 1961 found Lt Col Harris returning to the campus environment, this time at the University of Wyoming where he graduated in 1963 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

From the University of Wyoming the next stop was a transfer to the Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California.

Back in flight test activity, Lt Col Harris was assigned to the category II flight tests of the F-4C. Before Lt Col Harris left Edwards AFB he was also engaged in the test programs for the C-141 Starlifter and F-111 aircraft.

With this background experience, Lt Col Harris was sent to the Washington, D.C. area where he spent the next five years working on the development and production of the A-7D Corsair II tactical Fighter. Lt Col Harris was the Chief of Engineering on the A-7 project and remarked, "This is the first Air Force aircraft ever built for the specific purpose of the close air-ground tactical support role."

From the A-7 fighter to the helicopter was a considerable change, but Lt Col Harris completed the conversion to the HH-53C Super Jolly Green Giant in May 1971 at Eglin AFB, Florida.

Lt Col Harris assumed command of the 37 ARRSQ on 12 Sep 71. In regard to the mission of his squadron, he is quick to point out, "I firmly believe that rescue is the absolute best job any pilot could be engaged in."



# 37 ARRSQ HISTORY, 1 SEPT - 31 DECEMBER 1971

## CHAPTER II

### OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

#### OPERATIONS

The 37 ARRSQ has maintained the same alert posture which existed at the end of the 1 July - 30 September 1971 quarter, except the FOL at Bien Hoa closed on 4 December 1971.

Two HH-53's alpha alert, were cocked for a 15 minute response and two additional aircraft, bravo alert, were standing by for a 45 minute response during daylight hours. After sunset, the alpha aircraft and crews maintained the capability for a 45 minute response for feet wet pick ups.

Two other Da Nang based Jolly Greens maintained a 15 minute response capability at our Forward Operating Location at Bien Hoa thru 4 December 1971. This posture has allowed us to meet all mission requirements within our area of responsibility.

The squadron has also complied with the annual flying requirements and check flights as outlined in AFM 60-1 and AFM 51-4.

Operational data for the second quarter 1971 is as follows:

	<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Flying Hours	383.4	349.1	341.1	1073.6
Sorties	146	147	138	421
SAR Hours	13.2	55.9	63.1	132.2
SAR Sorties	9	26	23	58
Combat Saves	0	30	7	37
Non-Combat Saves	0	1	0	1

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During the month of December, one HH-53 aircraft was transferred from the 37 ARRSQ to Cam Ranh Bay for shipment back to the CONUS via C-5 aircraft.

One additional aircraft was lost in combat on 25 Nov 71. Two crewmembers survived and will return to duty shortly; three were killed in action and one is reported as missing in action. Those killed in action are: Maj Robert B. Swenck, Capt John W. George, and A1C Thomas D. Prose. SSgt James R. Thomas is listed as missing in action.

### BIEN HOA OPERATIONS

During the period 1 October to 4 December the squadron continued to maintain two aircraft on alert at Bien Hoa. The personnel required for the alert status at the FOL consisted of a Commander, four pilots, six enlisted crewmembers, and an average of six maintenance personnel. All of these people are assigned to the FOL on TDY orders and are roatated back to the home unit on a regular basis. Lt Col Harold R. Walther was the commander of the FOL during the quarter.

The alert aircraft at Bien Hoa were scrambled on numerous occasions during the quarter and were credited with 24 combat saves. Some of these were under extremely hazardous conditions and heavy enemy fire.

Bien Hoa operations were stopped on 4 Dec and all squadron personnel and aircraft returned to Da Nang.

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TRAINING

Training during this quarter was subjected to a severe over-load resulting from upgrading of Santa Anna MCAS trained pilots arriving in unqualified status. Of the nine pilots in this category requiring additional in-unit training prior to upgrade, two were upgraded to AC status, 4 to First Pilot status and 3 to co-pilot status. These training flights were in addition to the required Flight Examiner, Instructor Pilot, Aircraft Commander and First Pilot upgrades necessary to replace vacancies created by DEROS. Projecting into the next quarter (Jan - March) shows a considerable number of training flights which will be required. Of the twenty five pilots assigned 6 will DEROS during the January - March period. This is considered a normal DEROS loss except the following (April - June) quarter fourteen more pilots DEROS. Due to the severe projected loss of (April - June) quarter training flights must be increased during (Jan - March) quarter while the squadron still has the talent available to accomplish the training. Only five pilots presently assigned to the squadron have a DEROS date subsequent to 14 June 71. Three of these are presently First Pilots and two are co-pilots. All five are scheduled for further upgrade training as soon as training flights become available and minimum time required in aircraft is met. Adversely, some pilots may DEROS prior to attaining Aircraft Commander status primarily due to DEROS rollback resulting in them spending less than the normal twelve months assigned to the squadron.

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In-unit training of Flight Engineers resulted in two requalifying for flight status. One more Flight Engineer is expected to requalify during the Jan. - Mar quarter. One other fully qualified Flight Engineer is DNIF as a result of aircraft crash on 25 November and it is questionable whether he will requalify again prior to 16 May 72 DEROS. This leaves the flight engineer section six personnel under UMD strength, complicating their scheduling problem.

Continuous training is in progress for Pilots, Pararescue Specialist and flight engineers to assure continuous upgrade to higher qualified crew positions and to increase the level of job proficiency.

The following were upgraded to the indicated flight crew positions during this quarter.

OCTOBER

Captain Colgrove	Instructor Pilot
Captain Griffith	Aircraft Commander
Captain Dake	First Pilot
Captain Knutson	First Pilot
Captain Peck	First Pilot
Captain Sartori	First Pilot
Captain Sutton	First Pilot
TSG Young J.	FEPJ
MSG Shipper	PJ
AIC Ojala	IHM

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NOVEMBER

LCDR Crowe	Pilot Flight Examiner
Major Swench	Aircraft Commander
Captain Johnson	Aircraft Commander
Captain Wall	Aircraft Commander
Captain Jadrosich	First Pilot
Major Scott	Co-pilot
Captain George	Co-pilot
Sgt Drayer	FEHM
TSG Prater	IHM

DECEMBER

Captain Hampton	First Pilot
Captain Mullenix	First Pilot
TSG Avery	FEPJ
MSG Shipper	IPJ

~~CHAPTER III~~

MAINTENANCE

The 37th ARRSQ had an assigned aircraft force of ten HH-53C's and two HH-43F's until 25 November 71, when one HH-53C was destroyed by hostile fire while returning to the Forward Operating Location from a successful Search and Rescue mission south of Bien Hoa. On 24 December 71, an additional HH-53C was sent to Cam Rahn Bay, RVN for shipment.

A combined total of 21,132 possessed hours for HH-53C aircraft and 4,416 hours for HH-43F aircraft were recorded during this quarter. Maintenance made available 17,498 HH-53C hours and 2,587 HH-43F hours in-commission time by maintaining an accumulative Operational Ready Rate for the quarter of 82.8 percent and 58.5 percent respectively. The remaining 17.2 percent for the HH-53 was consumed by an accumulative 12.8 percent NORM and 4.4 percent NORS, while the 41.3 percent remaining for the HH-43's was consumed by a 17.7 percent NORM rate and a 23.6 percent NORS rate.

The required number of operationally ready aircraft was made available to meet all Search and Rescue activities during this quarter. The operational requirements of Operation Prize Bull, during which 10 aircraft were launched and flown a total of 47.2 hours in two days, and Operation Proud Deep, resulting in 20 sorties and 102.7 flying hours, were successfully met.

A total of ten HH-53 aircraft and one HH-43 aircraft were processed through Phase Inspection during this quarter. This corresponds favorably with 1058 and 163 hours flown respectively for each MDS aircraft. The improved effectiveness of the Phase

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Inspection and the increased quality of aircraft inspected have resulted from strict adherence to locally developed scheduling criteria and efficient management and education of assigned Phase Dock personnel by the Phase Dock Supervisor.

The total number of time change items replaced during this quarter was 86. Major items included were 3 primary servos, 1 main rotor head, 2 main gear boxes, 3 engines, and 3 more gear boxes. Time changes on the HH-43F included 1 transmission, 3 shaft and housing assemblies and an engine change.

CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION

This quarter was extremely busy for the 37 ARRSQ for hosting visitors. On 15 separate occasions we welcomed visitors to our unit, including such distinguished personalities as General Everest, Commander ARRS; Colonel Sohle, Commander, 41 ARRWG; Colonel Britton, Commander, 3 ARRGp, Colonel Dumontier, HQ ARRS/Personnel, Colonel Wallace, HQ ARRS/Plans, and Colonel Keel, HQ ARRS/Operations.

During this quarter the OER/APR Section monitored approximately 75 OER/APR's without a single late report. Efforts are being made to continue the upgrading of the quality of the reports as well as to keep up our on time rate.

This quarter saw the first non-rated Administrative Officer become assigned to the 37 ARRSQ. Lt John W. Kalp joined the organization on 1 Dec 71 and took over immediately. The continuity of a single Administrative Officer who is available all the time has already been felt. Although the previous Administrative Officer did an excellent job, he was sometimes flying and not available. The Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program continued its excellent progress and under Captain's Roger Colgrove and Gary Dake has settled all problems within the Squadron as they arose. Excellent progress is being made in long range problems.

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PERSONNEL

This quarter averaged an 87% manning level. We are authorized 197 enlisted men and have 163 assigned as of 31 Dec 71. We have 35 officers assigned against 43 authorized. By the end of January our manning will remain about the same and action has been taken to aid our more critical AFSCs

Maintenance manning in AFSC 431X0C has improved considerably. AFSC 702X0 suffered two unprojected losses in December, bringing them down to 7 with 10 authorized.

Aircrew manning has dropped this quarter. Pilot manning is down to 76% due to Novembers losses and no improvement in sight for the next quarter. At the end of the quarter, we had 12 qualified Flight Engineers against an authorized 15. Pararescue manning has dropped to 22 against 30 authorized leaving this critical AFSC only 73% manned.

The following is a breakdown of the squadron manning by AFSC at the end of the quarter:

<u>AFSC</u>	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>% MANNED</u>
10070	1	1	100
271X0	2	3	150
301X0	5	3	60
301X1	7	5	72
301X4	6	4	67
30194	1	1	100
325X0	5	5	100
3150A	2	1	50

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<u>FSC</u>	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>% MANNED</u>
421X2	5	4	80
421X3	3	3	100
423X0	6	4	67
431XOC	57	44	77
431XOB	5	9	180
A431XOC	15	12	80
A431XOB	4	5	125
43191	6	3	50
432X0	14	14	100
462X0	4	4	100
534X0	3	3	100
535X0	2	1	50
645X0	4	4	100
75172	1	1	100
70250	10	7	70
A923X0	30	22	73
102XP	30+3	25	76
102XC	6	6	100
40XX	2	2	100
6424A	1	1	100
7034	1	1	100

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AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

During this quarter the following decorations were submitted for approval:

Silver Star .....	12
Distinguished Flying Cross .....	36
Air Medal .....	93
Bronze Star Medal .....	4
Air Force Commendation Medal .....	12

During this quarter the following decorations were awarded:

Distinguished Flying Cross .....	30
Air Medal .....	115
Air Force Commendation Medal .....	4
Purple Heart .....	6

CHAPTER VI

SAFETY

The fourth quarter of 1971 saw the 37th experience its first ground accident of the year. A squadron enlisted member suffered a minor injury resulting in two days lost time.

During this period only one aircraft incident occurred: Aircraft incident 71-10. AFCS Servo Malfunction. While returning to Da Nang an aircraft experienced a one (1) inch jump in the collective pitch control. Control of the aircraft was maintained after the momentary disturbance. The exact symptoms re-occurred shortly afterwards. An uneventful landing was made at home station. Suspected cause factor: air in AFCS Servo system.

The Quarter saw one OHR submitted.

OHR 71-16: Gunners Belt. As a result of battle damage Jolly Green 70 crashed into the Song Nha Bhe River. One of the surviving crewmembers found himself underwater and secured to the aircraft by his gunners belt. The type of belt caused him great difficulty in freeing himself.

The 37th Safety Section conducted it's normal daily and monthly surveys throughout the Quarter. Additionally, 41. ARRWg semi-annual Inspection was conducted in December.

The current Squadron Safety Staff consists of the following individuals:

LCDR Roderick Martin III, USCG, Chief of Safety/Flying Safety Officer

Capt. Robert W. Uljua, Explosives Safety Officer/Ass't

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Flying Safety Officer

Capt. Kenneth Schroeder, Ground Safety Officer

SMSgt Lawrence Klug, Ground Safety NCO

TSgt James Barrett, Unit Safety NCO, Flying Safety NCO.

TSgt Jon L. Young, Explosives Safety NCO.

CHAPTER VII

FACILITIES

SQUADRON BUILDINGS

This quarter was marked by significant wind damage to our squadron buildings. On the 22 and 23 of October Typhoon Hester slashed across Da Nang with 105 MPH winds and heavy rains. The damage to Da Nang facilities was severe.

Hardest hit was our hanger building 1723 and the newly completed operations module inside. The hanger suffered damage to the main super structure and roof. The hanger doors, which were closed, were blown at the bottom and forced against the east side of the operations module, knocking down the entire wall. Part of the roof was blown way and the module experienced extensive water damage. The operation module was thoroughly drenched but not our spirit.

Repair and clean up operations were started immediately by all available personnel. The east end of the building was rebuilt by members of the squadron and a temporary plastic covering put on the roof to prevent further water damage. By the middle of November the facilities had been repaired and everything was back to normal.

ENLISTED BARRACKS

By the end of the quarter 70% of the hootches in the Camp Stokes area had been refurnished, painted inside and out and partitions built for more privacy. Sixteen of the hootches in the area were considered beyond repair and were torn down. All building material from the condemned buildings was saved to help rebuild the other hootches. The 7th maintenance personnel did an outstanding job of rebuilding their

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hatches with little or no help from the outside.

Material such as plywood, plastic, screen wire, door hinges, hasps etc. are on order for further improvement of the Camp Stokes area. Two clothes washers have been installed in each latrine on a self-help basis. One clothes dryer per latrine has also been installed but 220 volt electrical power is not available at this time. A work order has been submitted to correct the situation. A TDY hootch has been designated and work will begin as soon as weather permits.

### FLIGHT ENGINEER AND PARARESCUE SECTION

During the quarter the PJ's and FE's moved from air-conditioned barracks on the east side to a similar structure that was just a shell. The two story building was open bay with no improvements. The PJ's and FE's worked around the clock to partition off rooms and make them as liveable as possible. With limited time, equipment, and material they completely rebuilt the interior of the building. Even doors had to be made for the individual rooms. After the rooms were made liveable they accomplished the move from the east side of the base in one day. Air-conditioning is to be installed in the near future, with the wiring being installed at the present time.

The PJ's and FE's spent countless off duty hours in improving their quarters and other squadron buildings.

CHAPTER VIII  
PEDRO  
LOCAL BASE RESCUE MISSION

The mission of the Pedro Section of the 37th ARRSq, DaNang Afld, RVN is to operate and maintain search and rescue equipment to accomplish air crew recovery, local base rescue, and evacuation missions as directed. The section maintains a 24 hour alert with the capability of becoming airborne in three minutes during the day and in ten minutes at night. The geographical area of responsibility for air crew recovery is a radius of action of 75 miles. The radius of action of local base rescue response with the Fire Suppression Kit, which is the primary mission, is 15 miles.

MAINTENANCE

This unit had two helicopter assigned during this quarter, both HH-43F models; SN #62-4508 and SN #62-4560. On 26 Oct aircraft 62-4560 went into it's 11th phase inspection. Time change items in this phase included: the transmission, both shaft and housings, the right hand set of blades, and the transmission oil pump. During the inspection a crack was found along the trailing edge of a blade on the left head necessitating the changing of the left set of blades. After completion of the phase inspection a faulty N2 beep acuator was discovered on the Functional Check Flight. The acuator was changed as were the left set of blades when they were received from supply. Aircraft 62-4560 was placed back in commission on 8 Dec. On 9 Dec aircraft 62-4508 went into it's 1st phase inspection. Time change items during this phase were: the transmission and both sets of blades. Other faulty items which needed replacement included: the N2 beep acuator, flaps, low fuel warning system, and a master caution pannel.

The aircraft was not in commission as of the end of the quarter due to a lack of parts. On 17 Dec aircraft 62-4560 required an engine change, a change of the right hand blades, right hand shaft and housing change, and of flap change.

#### FACILITIES

Starting the first of October the entire alert facility was painted inside and out. By the time we finished painting the offices, we had enough tile to tile most of the offices. The Civil Engineers assisted in putting down the tile. On the 23rd of Oct Hester hit and along with water damage, blew the roof off of the storage area, tore the roof off of the porch, and destroyed the life support room. During the storm alert and section personnel placed sand bags on the roof to help hold on to the roof that was left. The next day after the storm cleared, everybody was busy cleaning up debris and rebuilding the roof and life support room. On the 26th of Oct the American flag was raised on the flag pole in front of the facility. The life support room was completed by 3 Nov. The middle of Nov was devoted to putting a rug in the Commander's office and building the party hooch, with materials scrounged by ourselves. The next project was to build a kitchen. It is complete except for the stove and ice boxes which were to be sent from Phu Cat. Once we receive these items our facility will be fairly well completed. There are a few minor projects left to be done, but all of our major building projects have been completed.

Red Horse has begun to build the covered revetment on the old French hanger floor. They plan to cover one side, which will house both aircraft without having to fold the blades. The other side will be open and will provide protection for the alert aircraft. This project is well under way and should be completed shortly.

#### OPERATIONS

The following table reflects the unit flying time for the quarter:

MISSION	SORTIES	FLYING TIME
Intercept	220	56.9
SAR Recovery	4	1.3
Med Evac & Base Support	4	1.8
Training	84	94.2
Maintenance	12	8.0
TOTAL	324	162.2

#### MISSION NARRATIVES

Mission No. A-03-039 7 Dec 71

At 2335L the Pedro alert crew was notified by the 366th USAF Dispensary that an explosion had occurred and several personnel received severe fragmentation injuries. The medevac was required due to the limited facilities at the 366th Dispensary, and the severity of the injuries. At 2345L Pedro 60 took off from Tango ramp, landing at the 366th pad at 2350L. The first patient was offloaded and the Flight Medical Officer accompanied the patient because of his critical condition. Takeoff was accomplished at 2354L and Pedro 60 landed at the 95th USA hospital at 2359L. The patient was offloaded and the doctor remained at the 95th. At 0003L Pedro 60 took off from the 95th pad and landed back at the 366th Dispensary at 0008L. The second patient was offloaded and Pedro 60 again lifted off for the 95th, landing there at 0015L.

The patient was offloaded and the flight surgeon got back in the helicopter and was taken back to the 366th Dispensary landing there at 0020L. Pedro 60 terminated this sortie at 0030L by landing at Tango ramp. The aircraft was serviced anticipating the medevac of a third patient. The crew was notified at 0215L that it was necessary to medivac the third patient. Pedro 60 was started and took off from Tango ramp 0220L and landed at the 366th pad at 0225L. The patient was onloaded and Pedro 60 took off for the 95th USA hospital at 0230L, where the patient was offloaded. Pedro 60 then returned to Tango ramp terminating the mission at 0250L. The aircraft was serviced and the alert crew assumed it's alert status. Three noncombat saves were credited to this mission.

Mission No. A-03-042 19 Dec 71

At 0035L the Pedro alert crew was notified by Queen Control that a Security Policeman had been shot and wounded by an enemy sniper and required a medevac to the 95th USA hospital. As a result of the wound the victim had sustained a compound fracture of the right femur further complicated by severe bleeding and extensive damage to the femoral nerve network. The aircraft was prepared for a medevac and departed from the alert pad at 0040L. After a short wait the patient was onloaded and takeoff accomplished at 0052L. Pedro 61 arrived at the 95th hospital at 0057L at which time the patient was delivered to awaiting attendants for immediate surgery. Departure was at 0130L and the mission terminated upon landing at Pedro pad at 0140L.

The attending physician stated that the patient required immediate emergency surgery and facilities not available at the 366th Dispensary. One noncombat save was credited for this mission.